

I Kings

מלכים א'

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I Kings

Chapter 1

King David was now old, advanced in years; and though they covered him with bedclothes, he never felt warm.

His courtiers said to him, "Let a young virgin be sought for my lord the king, to wait upon Your Majesty and be his attendant; a attendant Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and let her lie in your bosom, and my lord the king will be warm."

So they looked for a beautiful young woman throughout the territory of Israel. They found Abishag the Shunammite and brought her to the king. This young woman was exceedingly beautiful. She became the king's attendant b attendant Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and waited upon him; but the king was not intimate with her.

Now Adonijah son of Haggith went about boasting, c went about boasting Or "presumed to think." "I will be king!" He provided himself with chariots and horses, d horses Or "riders"; force of Heb. parash(im) uncertain. and an escort of fifty outrunners.

His father had never scolded him: "Why did you do that?" He was the one born after Absalom e the one born after Absalom Thus, Absalom having died, Adonijah was David's oldest living son. and, like him, was very handsome.

He conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with the priest Abiathar, and they supported Adonijah;

but the priest Zadok, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the prophet Nathan, Shimei and Rei, and David's own warriors did not side with Adonijah.

Adonijah made a sacrificial feast of sheep, oxen, and fatlings at the Zoheleth stone that is near En-rogel; he invited all his brother princes f all his brother princes Lit. "all his brothers sons of the king." and all the king's courtiers of the tribe of Judah;

but he did not invite the prophet Nathan, or Benaiah, or the warriors, or his brother Solomon.

Then Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "You must have heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has assumed the kingship without the knowledge of our lord David.

Now take my advice, so that you may save your life and the life of your son Solomon.

Go immediately to King David and say to him, 'Did not you, O lord king, swear to your maidservant: "Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit upon my throne"? Then why has Adonijah become king?' While you are still there talking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber.—The king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was waiting on the king.—

Bathsheba bowed low in homage to the king; and the king asked, "What troubles you?"

She answered him, "My lord, you yourself swore to your maidservant by the E TERNAL your God: 'Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit upon my throne.'

Yet now Adonijah has become king, and you, g you So many mss. and ancient versions; usual editions "now." my lord the king, know nothing about it. He has prepared a sacrificial feast of a great many oxen, fatlings, and sheep, and he has invited all the king's sons and Abiathar the priest and Joab commander of the army; but he has not invited your servant Solomon. And so the eyes of all Israel are upon you, O lord king, to tell them who shall succeed my lord the king on the throne.

Otherwise, when my lord the king rests with his ancestors, my son Solomon and I will be regarded as traitors."

She was still talking to the king when the prophet Nathan arrived.

They announced to the king, "The prophet Nathan is here," and he entered the king's presence. Bowing low to the king with his face to the ground, Nathan said, "O lord king, you must have said, h you must have said Or (cf. Rashi, Ralbag, Radak) "have you said...?" 'Adonijah shall succeed me as king and he shall sit upon my throne.'

For he has gone down today and prepared a sacrificial feast of a great many oxen, fatlings, and sheep. He invited all the king's sons and the army officers and Abiathar the priest. At this very moment they are eating and drinking with him, and they are shouting, 'Long live King Adonijah!'

But he did not invite me your servant, or the priest Zadok, or Benaiah son of Jehoiada, or your servant Solomon.

Can this decision have come from my lord the king, without your telling your servant who is to succeed to the throne of my lord the king?"

King David's response was: "Summon Bathsheba!" She entered the king's presence and stood before the king.

And the king took an oath, saying, "As G OD lives, who has rescued me from every trouble:

The oath I swore to you by the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, that your son Solomon should succeed me as king and that he should sit upon my throne in my stead, I will fulfill this very day!"

Bathsheba bowed low in homage to the king with her face to the ground, and she said, "May my lord King David live forever!"

Then King David said, "Summon to me the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king, the king said to them, "Take my loyal soldiers, i my loyal soldiers Lit. "your lord's men." and have my son Solomon ride on my mule and bring him down to Gihon.

Let the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anoint him there king over Israel, whereupon you shall sound the horn and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!'

Then march up after him, and let him come in and sit on my throne. For he shall succeed me as king; him I designate to be ruler of Israel and Judah."

Benaiah son of Jehoiada spoke up and said to the king, "Amen! And may the E TERNAL, the God of my lord the king, so ordain.

As G OD was with my lord the king, so may it be with Solomon; and may his throne be exalted even higher than the throne of my lord King David."

Then the priest Zadok, and the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada went down with the Cherethites and the Pelethites. They had Solomon ride on King David's mule and they led him to Gihon.

The priest Zadok took the horn of oil from the Tent and anointed Solomon. They sounded the horn and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!"

All the people then marched up behind him, playing on flutes and making merry till the earth was split open by the uproar.

Adonijah and all the guests who were with him, who had just finished eating, heard it. When Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, "Why is the city in such an uproar?"

He was still speaking when the priest Jonathan son of Abiathar arrived. "Come in," said Adonijah. "You are a worthy man, and you surely bring good news."

But Jonathan replied to Adonijah, "Alas, our lord King David has made Solomon king!

The king sent with him the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and Pelethites. They had him ride on the king's mule,

and the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anointed him king at Gihon. Then they came up from there making merry, and the city went into an uproar. That's the noise you heard.

Further, Solomon seated himself on the royal throne;

further, the king's courtiers came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the renown of Solomon even greater than yours, and may his throne be exalted even higher than yours!' And the king bowed low on his couch.

And further, this is what the king said, 'Praised be the E TERNAL, the God of Israel who has this day provided a successor to my throne, while my own eyes can see it.'"

Thereupon, all of Adonijah's guests rose in alarm and went off in every direction.

Adonijah, in fear of Solomon, went at once [to the Tent] and grasped the horns of the altar.

It was reported to Solomon: "Adonijah is in fear of King Solomon and has grasped the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon first swear to me that he will not put his servant to the sword.'"

Solomon said, "If he behaves worthily, not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground; but if he is caught in any offense, he shall die."

So King Solomon sent and had him taken down from the altar. He came and bowed before King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, "Go home."

Chapter 2

When David's life was drawing to a close, he instructed his son Solomon as follows:

"I am going the way of all the earth; you will be the man in charge—if you act with determination. a you will be the man in charge—if you act with determination Or "be strong and show yourself a man."

Keep the charge of the E TERNAL your God, walking in God's ways and following God's laws, commandments, rules, and admonitions as recorded in the Teaching of Moses, in order that you may succeed in whatever you undertake and wherever you turn.

Then G OD will fulfill the promise that was made concerning me: 'If your descendants are scrupulous in their conduct, and walk before Me faithfully, with all their heart and soul, your line on the throne of Israel shall never end!' b your line on the throne...shall never end Lit. "there shall never cease to be a man of yours on the throne," i.e., ruling on your behalf. Cf. 2 Sam. 7.12-16.

"Further, you know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me, what he did to the two commanders of Israel's forces, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether: he killed them, shedding c shedding Meaning of Heb. uncertain. blood of war in peacetime, staining the girdle of his loins and the sandals on his feet with blood of war. d staining ... with blood of war I.e., Joab had thus brought bloodguilt on David's house; see 2 Sam. 3.27; 20.10.

So act in accordance with your wisdom, and see that his white hair does not go down to Sheol in peace.

"But deal graciously with the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, for they befriended me when I fled from your brother Absalom; let them be among

those that eat at your table. e that eat at your table I.e., for whose maintenance you provide; see 2 Sam. 19.32ff.

"You must also deal with Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim. He insulted me outrageously when I was on my way to Mahanaim; but he came down to meet me at the Jordan, f he came down to meet me at the Jordan See 2 Sam. 16.5ff.; 19.17ff. and I swore to him by G OD : 'I will not put you to the sword.'

So do not let him go unpunished; for you are a shrewd man and you will know how to deal with him and send his gray hair down to Sheol in blood." So David rested with his ancestors, and he was buried in the City of David.

The length of David's reign over Israel was forty years: he reigned seven years in Hebron, and he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

And Solomon sat upon the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.

Adonijah son of Haggith came to see Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. She said, "Do you come with friendly intent?" "Yes," he replied; and he continued, "I would like to have a word with you." "Speak up," she said.

Then he said, "You know that the kingship was rightly mine and that all Israel wanted me to reign. But the kingship passed on to my brother; it came to him by G OD 's will.

And now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me." She said, "Speak up."

He replied, "Please ask King Solomon—for he won't refuse you—to give me Abishag the Shunammite as wife."

"Very well," said Bathsheba, "I will speak to the king in your behalf."

So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him about Adonijah. The king rose to greet her and bowed down to her. He sat on his throne; and he had a throne placed for the queen mother, and she sat on his right. She said, "I have one small request to make of you, do not refuse me." He responded, "Ask, Mother; I shall not refuse you."

Then she said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to your brother Adonijah as wife."

The king replied to his mother, "Why request Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Request the kingship for him! For he is my older brother, and the priest Abiathar and Joab son of Zeruiah are on his side." g and the priest Abiathar and Joab son of Zeruiah are on his side Lit. "And for him and for Abiathar and for Joab son of Zeruiah." Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Thereupon, King Solomon swore by G OD, saying, "So may God do to me and even more, if broaching this matter does not cost Adonijah his life!

Now, as G OD lives, who has established me and set me on the throne of my father David and who has provided him h him Heb. "me." with a house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this very day!"

And Solomon instructed Benaiah son of Jehoiada, who struck Adonijah i Adonijah Heb. "him." down; and so he died.

To the priest Abiathar, the king said, "Go to your estate at Anathoth! You deserve to die, but I shall not put you to death at this time, because you carried the Ark of my Sovereign G OD before my father David and because you shared all the hardships that my father endured."

So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from his office of priest of G OD —thus fulfilling what G OD had spoken at Shiloh j what G OD had spoken at Shiloh Cf. 1 Sam. 3.14. regarding the house of Eli.

When the news reached Joab, he fled to the Tent of G OD and grasped the horns of the altar—for Joab had sided with Adonijah, though he had not sided with Absalom.

King Solomon was told that Joab had fled to the Tent of G OD and that he was there by the altar; so Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go and strike him down."

Benaiah went to the Tent of G OD and said to him, "Thus said the king: Come out!" "No!" he replied; "I will die here." Benaiah reported back to the king that Joab had answered thus and thus, and the king said, "Do just as he said; strike him down and bury him, and remove guilt from me and my father's house for the blood of the innocent that Joab has shed.

Thus G OD will bring his blood guilt down upon his own head, because, unbeknown to my father, he struck down with the sword two men more righteous and honorable than he—Abner son of Ner, the army commander of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, the army commander of Judah. May the guilt for their blood come down upon the head of Joab and his descendants forever, and may good fortune from G OD be granted forever to David and his descendants, his house and his throne."

So Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down. And he was buried at his home in the wilderness.

In his place, the king appointed Benaiah son of Jehoiada over the army, and in place of Abiathar, the king appointed the priest Zadok. Then the king summoned Shimei and said to him, "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and stay there—do not ever go out from there anywhere else. On the very day that you go out and cross the Wadi Kidron, you can be sure that you will die; your blood shall be on your own head." "That is fair," said Shimei to the king, "your servant will do just as my lord the king has spoken." And for a long time, Shimei remained in Jerusalem.

Three years later, two slaves of Shimei ran away to King Achish son of Maacah of Gath. Shimei was told, "Your slaves are in Gath."

Shimei thereupon saddled his donkey and went to Achish in Gath to claim his slaves; and Shimei returned from Gath with his slaves.

Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and back, and the king summoned Shimei and said to him, "Did I not adjure you by G OD and warn you, 'On the very day that you leave and go anywhere else, you can be sure that you will die,' and did you not say to me, 'It is fair; I accept'?"

Why did you not abide by the oath before G OD and by the orders that I gave you?"

The king said further to Shimei, "You know all the wrong, which you remember very well, that you did to my father David. Now G OD brings down your wrongdoing upon your own head.

But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before G OD forever."

The king gave orders to Benaiah son of Jehoiada and he went out and struck Shimei k Shimei Heb. "him." down; and so he died. Thus the kingdom was secured in Solomon's hands.

Chapter 3

Solomon allied himself by marriage with Pharaoh king of Egypt. He married Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the City of David [to live there] until he had finished building his palace, and the House of G OD, and the walls around Jerusalem.

The people, however, continued to offer sacrifices at the open shrines, because up to that time no house had been built for G OD 's name.

And Solomon, though he loved G OD and followed the practices of his father David, also sacrificed and offered at the shrines.

The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the largest shrine; on that altar Solomon presented a thousand burnt offerings.

At Gibeon G OD appeared to a appeared to Or "made contact with." Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask, what shall I grant you?"

Solomon said, "You dealt most graciously with Your servant my father David, because he walked before You in faithfulness and righteousness and

in integrity of heart. You have continued this great kindness to him by giving him a son to occupy his throne, as is now the case.

And now, my ETERNAL God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David; but I am a young lad, with no experience in leadership. b with no experience in leadership Lit. "do not know going out and coming in"; cf. Num. 27.17.

Your servant finds himself in the midst of the people You have chosen, a people too numerous to be numbered or counted.

Grant, then, Your servant an understanding mind c understanding mind Lit. "listening heart." to judge Your people, to distinguish between good and bad; for who can judge this vast people of Yours?"

Pleased that Solomon had asked for this,

God said to him, "Because you asked for this—you did not ask for long life, you did not ask for riches, you did not ask for the life of your enemies, but you asked for discernment in dispensing justice—

I now do as you have spoken. I grant you a wise and discerning mind; there has never been anyone like you before, nor will anyone like you arise again.

And I also grant you what you did not ask for—both riches and glory all your life—the like of which no king has ever had.

And I will further grant you long life, if you will walk in My ways and observe My laws and commandments, as did your father David."

Then Solomon awoke: it was a dream! He went to Jerusalem, stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Sovereign One, and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented offerings of well-being; and he made a banquet for all his courtiers.

Later two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him.

The first woman said, "Please, my lord! This woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house.

On the third day after I was delivered, this woman also gave birth to a child. We were alone; there was no one else with us in the house, just the two of us in the house.

During the night this woman's child died, because she lay on it.

She arose in the night and took my son from my side while your maidservant was asleep, and laid him in her bosom; and she laid her dead son in my bosom.

When I arose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, it was not the son I had borne."

The other woman spoke up, "No, the live one is my son, and the dead one is yours!" But the first insisted, "No, the dead boy is yours; mine is the live one!" And they went on arguing before the king.

The king said, "One says, 'This is my son, the live one, and the dead one is yours'; and the other says, 'No, the dead boy is yours, mine is the live one.'"

So the king gave the order, "Fetch me a sword." A sword was brought before the king,

and the king said, "Cut the live child in two, and give half to one and half to the other."

But the woman whose son was the live one pleaded with the king, for she was overcome with compassion for her son. "Please, my lord," she cried, "give her the live child; only don't kill it!" The other insisted, "It shall be neither yours nor mine; cut it in two!"

Then the king spoke up. "Give the live child to her," he said, "and do not put it to death; she is its mother."

When all Israel heard the decision that the king had rendered, they stood in awe of the king; for they saw that he possessed divine wisdom to execute justice.

King Solomon was now king over all Israel.
 These were his officials: Azariah son of Zadok—the priest;
 Elihoreph and Ahijah sons of Shisha—scribes; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud—
 recorder;
 Benaiah son of Jehoiada—over the army; Zadok and Abiathar—priests;
 Azariah son of Nathan—in charge of the prefects; Zabud son of Nathan the
 priest—companion of the king;
 Ahishar—in charge of the palace; and Adoniram son of Abda—in charge of the
 forced labor.
 Solomon had twelve prefects governing all Israel, who provided food for
 the king and his household; each had to provide food for one month in the
 year.
 And these were their names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim;
 Ben-deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan;
 Ben-hesed in Arubboth—he governed Socho and all the Hephher area;
 Ben-abinadab, [in] all of Naphath-dor (Solomon's daughter Taphath was his
 wife);
 Baana son of Ahilud [in] Taanach and Megiddo and all Beth-shean, which is
 beside Zarethan, below Jezreel—from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah as far as
 the other side of Jokmeam;
 Ben-geber, in Ramoth-gilead—he governed the villages of Jair son of
 Manasseh that are in Gilead, and he also governed the district of Argob
 that is in Bashan, sixty large towns with walls and bronze bars;
 Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim;
 Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he too took a daughter of Solomon—Basemath—to
 wife);
 Baanah son of Hushi, in Asher and Bealoth; a Bealoth Or "in Aloth."
 Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar;
 Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin;
 Geber son of Uri, in the region of Gilead, the country of Sihon, king of
 the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan; and one prefect who was in the
 land. b and one prefect who was in the land Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
 Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sands of the sea; they ate and
 drank and were content.

Chapter 5

Solomon's rule extended over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the
 land of the Philistines and the boundary of Egypt. They brought Solomon
 tribute and were subject to him all his life.
 Solomon's daily provisions consisted of 30 kor s of semolina, and 60 kor
 s of [ordinary] flour,
 10 fattened oxen, 20 pasture-fed oxen, and 100 sheep and goats, besides
 deer and gazelles, roebucks and fatted geese. a fatted geese Exact
 meaning of Heb. uncertain.
 For he controlled the whole region west of the Euphrates—all the kings
 west of the Euphrates, from Tiphseh to Gaza—and he had peace on all his
 borders round about.
 All the days of Solomon, Judah and Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba dwelt in
 safety, every family under its own vine and fig tree.
 Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariotry and 12,000 riders.
 b Resuming the account begun in 4.2. All those prefects, each during his
 month, would furnish provisions for King Solomon and for all who were
 admitted to King Solomon's table; they did not fall short in anything.
 They would also, each in his turn, deliver barley and straw for the
 horses and the swift steeds to the places where they were stationed.
 God endowed Solomon with wisdom and discernment in great measure, with
 understanding as vast as the sands on the seashore.
 Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the Kedemites and
 than all the wisdom of the Egyptians.

He was wiser than anybody else—including Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalkol, and Darda the sons of Mahol. His fame spread among all the surrounding nations.

He composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered one thousand and five.

He discoursed about trees, from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall; and he discoursed about beasts, birds, creeping things, and fishes.

Envoys c Envoys Heb. "They." came from all peoples to hear Solomon's wisdom, [sent] by all the monarchs of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

King Hiram of Tyre sent his officials to Solomon when he heard that he had been anointed king in place of his father; for Hiram had always been a friend of David.

Solomon sent this message to Hiram:

"You know that my father David could not build a house for the name of the E TERNAL his God because of the enemies d enemies Heb. "war"; cf. Targum. that encompassed him, until G OD had placed them under the soles of his feet.

But now the E TERNAL my God has given me respite all around; there is no adversary and no mischance.

And so I propose to build a house for the name of the E TERNAL my God, as the E TERNAL promised my father David, saying, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for My name.'

Please, then, give orders for cedars to be cut for me in the Lebanon. My servants will work with yours, and I will pay you any wages you may ask for your servants; for as you know, there is none among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians."

When Hiram heard Solomon's message, he was overjoyed. "Praised be G OD this day," he said, "for granting David a wise son to govern this great people."

So Hiram sent word to Solomon: "I have your message; I will supply all the cedar and cypress logs you require.

My servants will bring them down to the sea from the Lebanon; and at the sea I will make them into floats and [deliver them] to any place that you designate to me. There I shall break them up for you to carry away. You, in turn, will supply the food I require for my household."

So Hiram kept Solomon provided with all the cedar and cypress wood he required,

and Solomon delivered to Hiram 20,000 kor s of wheat as provisions for his household and 20 kor s e 20 kor s Septuagint reads, "20,000 bath s." of beaten oil. Such was Solomon's annual payment to Hiram.

G OD

had given Solomon wisdom, just as promised. There was friendship between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty.

King Solomon imposed forced labor on all Israel; the levy came to 30,000 men.

He sent them to the Lebanon in shifts of 10,000 a month: they would spend one month in the Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the forced labor.

Solomon also had 70,000 porters and 80,000 quarriers in the hills, apart from Solomon's 3,300 officials who were in charge of the work and supervised the gangs doing the work.

The king ordered huge blocks of choice stone to be quarried, so that the foundations of the house might be laid with hewn stones.

Solomon's masons, Hiram's masons, and those from Gebal shaped them. Thus the timber and the stones for building the house were made ready.

In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites left the land of Egypt, in the month of Ziv—that is, the second month—in the fourth year of his reign over Israel, Solomon began to build the House of G OD. The House that King Solomon built for G OD was 60 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high.

The portico in front of the Great Hall of the House was 20 cubits long—along the width of the House—and 10 cubits deep to the front of the House.

a Meaning of parts of vv. 4-6 is uncertain. He made windows for the House, recessed and latticed.

Against the outside wall of the House—the outside walls of the House enclosing the Great Hall and the Shrine b the Shrine I.e., the inner sanctuary, designated in v. 16 and elsewhere as the “Holy of Holies.” —he built a storied structure; and he made side chambers all around.

The lowest story was 5 cubits wide, the middle one 6 cubits wide, and the third 7 cubits wide; for he had provided recesses around the outside of the House so as not to penetrate the walls of the House.

When the House was built, only finished stones cut at the quarry were used, so that no hammer or ax or any iron tool was heard in the House while it was being built.

The entrance to the middle c middle Septuagint and Targum read “lowest.” [story of] the side chambers was on the right side of the House; and winding stairs led up to the middle chambers, and from the middle chambers to the third story.

When he finished building the House, he paneled the House with beams and planks of cedar. d he paneled the House with beams and planks of cedar Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

He built the storied structure against the entire House—each story 5 cubits high, so that it encased the House with timbers of cedar.

Then the word of G OD came to Solomon,

“With regard to this House you are building—if you follow My laws and observe My rules and faithfully keep My commandments, I will fulfill for you the promise that I gave to your father David:

I will abide among the children of Israel, and I will never forsake My people Israel.”

When Solomon had completed the construction of the House, he paneled the walls of the House on the inside with planks of cedar. He also overlaid the walls on the inside with wood, from the floor of the House to the ceiling. And he overlaid the floor of the House with planks of cypress.

Twenty cubits from the rear of the House, he built [a partition] of cedar planks from the floor to the walls; e walls Septuagint reads “rafters.”

he furnished its interior to serve as a shrine, as the Holy of Holies.

f Meaning of vv. 17-22 is unclear in part. The front part of the House, that is, the Great Hall, measured 40 cubits.

The cedar of the interior of the House had carvings of gourds and calyxes; it was all cedar, no stone was exposed.

In the innermost part of the House, he fixed a Shrine in which to place the Ark of G OD 's Covenant.

The interior of the g The interior of the Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Shrine was 20 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 20 cubits high. He overlaid it with solid gold; he similarly overlaid [its] cedar altar.

Solomon overlaid the interior of the House with solid gold; and he inserted golden chains into the door of h into the door of Heb. “in front of.” the Shrine. He overlaid [the Shrine] with gold,

so that the entire House was overlaid with gold; he even overlaid with gold the entire altar of the Shrine. And so the entire House was completed.

In the Shrine he made two cherubim of olive wood, each 10 cubits high.

[One] had a wing measuring 5 cubits and another wing measuring 5 cubits, so that the spread from wingtip to wingtip was 10 cubits; and the wingspread of the other cherub was also 10 cubits. The two cherubim had the same measurements and proportions: the height of the one cherub was 10 cubits, and so was that of the other cherub.

He placed the cherubim inside the inner chamber. i inner chamber I.e., the Shrine. Since the wings of the cherubim were extended, a wing of the one touched one wall and a wing of the other touched the other wall, while their wings in the center of the chamber touched each other. He overlaid the cherubim with gold.

All over the walls of the House, of both the inner area and the outer area, he carved reliefs of cherubim, palms, and calyxes, and he overlaid the floor of the House with gold, both the inner and the outer areas.

For the entrance of the Shrine he made doors of olive wood, the pilasters and the doorposts having five sides. j the pilasters and the doorposts having five sides Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

The double doors were of olive wood, and on them he carved reliefs of cherubim, palms, and calyxes. He overlaid them with gold, hammering the gold onto the cherubim and the palms.

For the entrance of the Great Hall, too, he made doorposts of oleaster wood, having four sides, k having four sides Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and the double doors of cypress wood, each door consisting of two rounded planks.

On them he carved cherubim, palms, and calyxes, overlaying them with gold applied evenly over the carvings.

He built the inner enclosure of three courses of hewn stones and one course of cedar beams.

In the fourth year, in the month of Ziv, the foundations of the House of G OD were laid;

and in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul—that is, the eighth month—the House was completed according to all its details and all its specifications. It took him seven years to build it.

Chapter 7

And it took Solomon thirteen years to build his palace, until his whole palace was completed.

He built the Lebanon Forest House with four rows a Lebanon Forest House with four rows So called because of the rows of cedar columns. Septuagint reads "three rows" instead of "four rows"; cf. v. 3. of cedar columns, and with hewn cedar beams above the columns. Its length was 100 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits.

It was paneled above with cedar, with the planks b planks Apparently the "planks" connected the columns longitudinally, and the "beams" (v. 2) connected the planks transversely. that were above on the 45 columns—15 in each row.

And there were three rows of window frames, with three tiers of windows facing each other.

All the doorways and doorposts c doorposts Septuagint reads "windows." had square frames—with three tiers of windows facing each other.

He made the portico of columns 50 cubits long and 30 cubits wide; the portico was in front of [the columns], and there were columns with a canopy in front of them. d the portico was in front ... a canopy in front of them Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

He made the throne portico, where he was to pronounce judgment—the Hall of Judgment. It was paneled with cedar from floor to floor. e floor Syriac reads "rafters."

The house that he used as a residence, in the rear courtyard, back of the portico, was of the same construction. Solomon also constructed a palace like that portico for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom he had married. All these buildings, from foundation to coping and all the way out to the great courtyard, were of choice stones, hewn according to measure, smooth on all sides. f smooth on all sides Lit. "sawed with a saw in the inside and outside."

The foundations were huge blocks of choice stone, stones of 10 cubits and stones of 8 cubits;

and above were choice stones, hewn according to measure, and cedar wood. The large surrounding courtyard had three tiers of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams, the same as for the inner court of the House of G OD, and for the portico of the House.

King Solomon sent for Hiram and brought him down from Tyre.

He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father had been a Tyrian, a coppersmith. He was endowed with skill, ability, and talent for executing all work in bronze. g bronze Heb. nehosheth denotes both copper and bronze. In the translation "copper" is ordinarily used for the natural product and "bronze" for the artifacts. He came to King Solomon and executed all his work.

He cast two columns of bronze; one column was 18 cubits high and measured 12 cubits in circumference, [and similarly] the other column.

He made two capitals, cast in bronze, to be set upon the two columns, the height of each of the two capitals being 5 cubits;

also nets of meshwork with festoons of chainwork for the capitals that were on the top of the columns, seven for each of the two capitals.

He made the columns h columns Two Heb. mss. read "pomegranates." so that there were two rows [of pomegranates] encircling the top of the one network, to cover the capitals that were on the top of the pomegranates; i pomegranates About fifty Heb. mss. read "columns." and he did the same for [the network on] the second capital.

The capitals upon the columns of the portico were of lily design, 4 cubits high;

so also the capitals upon the two columns extended above and next to the bulge j bulge Lit. "belly"; exact force of Heb. uncertain. that was beside the network. There were 200 pomegranates in rows around the top of the second capital. k the second capital I.e., each of the two capitals. He set up the columns at the portico of the Great Hall; he set up one column on the right and named it Jachin, and he set up the other column on the left and named it Boaz.

Upon the top of the columns there was a lily design. Thus the work of the columns was completed.

Then he made the tank l tank Lit. "sea." of cast metal, 10 cubits across from brim to brim, completely round; it was 5 cubits high, and it measured 30 cubits in circumference.

There were gourds below the brim completely encircling it—ten to a cubit, encircling the tank; the gourds were in two rows, cast in one piece with it.

It stood upon twelve oxen: three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east, with the tank resting upon them; their haunches were all turned inward.

It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like that of a cup, like the petals of a lily. Its capacity was 2,000 bath s.

He made the ten laver stands of bronze. The length of each laver stand was 4 cubits and the width 4 cubits, and the height was 3 cubits.

The structure of the laver stands was as follows: They had insets, m insets Emendation yields "frames." and there were insets within the frames;

and on the insets within the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. Above the frames was a stand; and both above and below the lions and the oxen were spirals of hammered metal.

Each laver stand had four bronze wheels and [two] bronze axletrees. Its four legs had brackets; the brackets were under the laver, cast with spirals beyond each. n with spirals beyond each Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Its funnel, within the crown, rose a cubit above it; this funnel was round, in the fashion of a stand, a cubit and a half in diameter. On the funnel too there were carvings. But the insets were square, not round. And below the insets were the four wheels. The axletrees of the wheels were [fixed] in the laver stand, and the height of each wheel was a cubit and a half.

The structure of the wheels was like the structure of chariot wheels; and their axletrees, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all of cast metal.

Four brackets ran to the four corners of each laver stand; the brackets were of a piece with the laver stand.

At the top of the laver stand was a round band half a cubit high, and together with the top of the laver stand; its sides and its insets were of one piece with it.

On its surface—on its sides—and on its insets [Hiram] engraved cherubim, lions, and palms, as the clear space on each allowed, o On its surface ... allowed Meaning of Heb. uncertain. with spirals round about.

It was after this manner that he made the ten laver stands, all of them cast alike, of the same measure and the same form.

Then he made ten bronze lavers, one laver on each of the ten laver stands, each laver measuring 4 cubits and each laver containing forty bath s.

He disposed the laver stands, five at the right side of the House and five at its left side; and the tank he placed on the right side of the House, at the southeast [corner].

Hiram also made the lavers, the scrapers, and the sprinkling bowls. So Hiram finished all the work that he had been doing for King Solomon on the House of G OD :

the two columns, the two globes of the capitals upon the columns; and the two pieces of network to cover the two globes of the capitals upon the columns;

the four hundred pomegranates for the two pieces of network, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two globes of the capitals upon the columns;

the ten stands and the ten lavers upon the stands;

the one tank with the twelve oxen underneath the tank;

the pails, the scrapers, and the sprinkling bowls. All those vessels in the House of G OD that Hiram made for King Solomon were of burnished bronze.

The king had them cast in earthen molds, p in earthen molds Lit. "in the thick of the earth." in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan.

Solomon left all the vessels [unweighed] because of their very great quantity; the weight of the bronze was not reckoned.

And Solomon made all the furnishings that were in the House of G OD : the altar, of gold; the table for the bread of display, of gold;

the lampstands—five on the right side and five on the left—in front of the Shrine, of solid gold; and the petals, lamps, and tongs, of gold; the basins, snuffers, sprinkling bowls, ladles, and fire pans, of solid gold; and the hinge sockets for the doors of the innermost part of the House, the Holy of Holies, and for the doors of the Great Hall of the House, of gold.

When all the work that King Solomon had done in the House of G OD was completed, Solomon brought in the sacred donations of his father David—the silver, the gold, and the vessels—and deposited them in the treasury of the House of G OD.

Chapter 8

Then Solomon convoked the elders of Israel—all the heads of the tribes and the ancestral chieftains of the Israelites—before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of G OD from the City of David, that is, Zion.

The entire body of Israel a The entire body of Israel I.e., the elders of vv. 1 and 3, representing the nation. gathered before King Solomon at the Feast [of Booths], b the Feast [of Booths] Cf. Lev. 23.34. in the month of Ethanim—that is, the seventh month.

When all the elders of Israel had come, the priests lifted the Ark and carried up the Ark of G OD. Then the priests and the Levites brought the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent.

Meanwhile, King Solomon and the whole community of Israel, c whole community of Israel I.e., the elders, on the community's behalf. who were assembled with him before the Ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen in such abundance that they could not be numbered or counted.

The priests brought the Ark of G OD 's Covenant to its place underneath the wings of the cherubim, in the Shrine of the House, in the Holy of Holies;

for the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim shielded the Ark and its poles from above.

The poles projected so that the ends of the poles were visible in the sanctuary in front of the Shrine, but they could not be seen outside; and there they remain to this day.

There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets of stone that Moses placed there at Horeb, when G OD made [a covenant] with the Israelites after their departure from the land of Egypt.

When the priests came out of the sanctuary—for the cloud had filled the House of G OD

and the priests were not able to remain and perform the service because of the cloud, for the Presence of the E TERNAL filled the House of G OD — then Solomon declared: " G OD has chosen To abide in a thick cloud: I have now built for You A stately House, A place where You May dwell forever."

Then, with the whole congregation of Israel standing, the king faced about and blessed the whole congregation of Israel.

He said: "Praised be the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, who has fulfilled with deeds the promise made d who has fulfilled with deeds the promise made Lit. "who spoke with His own mouth...and has fulfilled with His own hand." to my father David. For [God] said,

'Ever since I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city among all the tribes of Israel for building a House where My name might abide; but I have chosen David to rule My people Israel.'

"Now my father David had intended to build a House for the name of the E TERNAL One, the God of Israel.

But G OD said to my father David, 'As regards your intention to build a House for My name, you did right to have that intention.

However, you shall not build the House yourself; instead, your son, the issue of your loins, shall build the House for My name.'

"And G OD has fulfilled the promise that was made: I have succeeded e succeeded Lit. "risen in place of." my father David and have ascended the throne of Israel, as G OD promised. I have built the House for the name of the E TERNAL One, the God of Israel;

and I have set a place there for the Ark, containing the covenant that G OD made with our ancestors upon bringing them out from the land of Egypt."

Then Solomon stood before the altar of G OD in the presence of the whole community of Israel; he spread the palms of his hands toward heaven and said, "O E TERNAL God of Israel, in the heavens above and on the earth below there is no god like You, who keep Your gracious covenant with Your servants when they walk before You in wholehearted devotion; You who have kept the promises You made to Your servant, my father David, fulfilling with deeds the promise You made—as is now the case.

And now, O E TERNAL God of Israel, keep the further promise that You made to Your servant, my father David: 'Your line on the throne of Israel shall never end, f Your line on the throne of Israel shall never end See note at 2.4. if only your descendants will look to their way and walk before Me as you have walked before Me.'

Now, therefore, O God of Israel, let the promise that You made to Your servant my father David be fulfilled.

"But will God really dwell g dwell Cf. 2 Chron. 6.18, which adds "with humankind." on earth? Even the heavens to their uttermost reaches cannot contain You, how much less this House that I have built!

Yet turn, my E TERNAL God, to the prayer and supplication of Your servant, and hear the cry and prayer that Your servant offers before You this day.

May Your eyes be open day and night toward this House, toward the place of which You have said, 'My name shall abide there'; may You heed the prayers that Your servant will offer toward this place.

And when You hear the supplications that Your servant and Your people Israel offer toward this place, give heed in Your heavenly abode—give heed and pardon.

"Whenever one person commits an offense against another, and the latter utters an imprecation to bring a curse upon the former, h and the latter utters an imprecation to bring a curse upon the former Or "and is made to take an oath and utter a self-imprecation." and comes with that imprecation before Your altar in this House,

oh, hear in heaven and take action to judge Your servants, condemning the one who is in the wrong and bringing down the punishment of their conduct on their head—while vindicating the other, who is in the right, by rewarding them according to their righteousness.

"Should Your people Israel be routed by an enemy because they have sinned against You, and then turn back to You and acknowledge Your name, and they offer prayer and supplication to You in this House, oh, hear in heaven and pardon the sin of Your people Israel, and restore them to the land that You gave to their ancestors.

"Should the heavens be shut up and there be no rain, because they have sinned against You, and then they pray toward this place and acknowledge Your name and repent of their sins, when You answer i answer The Septuagint, with a different vocalization, reads "chastise." them, oh, hear in heaven and pardon the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, after You have shown them the proper way in which they are to walk; and send down rain upon the land that You gave to Your people as their heritage.

So, too, if there is a famine in the land, if there is pestilence, blight, mildew, locusts or caterpillars, or if an enemy oppresses them in any of the settlements of the land. "In any plague and in any disease, in any prayer or supplication offered by any person among all Your people Israel—each of whom knows their own affliction—when they spread their palms toward this House,

oh, hear in Your heavenly abode, and pardon and take action! Render to that individual according to their ways as You know their heart to be—for You alone know every human heart.

Thus may Your people j Your people Lit. "they." revere You all the days that they live on the land that You gave to our ancestors.

"Or if a foreigner who is not of Your people Israel comes from a distant land for the sake of Your name—
for they shall hear about Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm—and thus comes to pray toward this House,
oh, hear in Your heavenly abode and grant all that the foreigner asks You for. Thus all the peoples of the earth will know Your name and revere You, as does Your people Israel; and they will recognize that Your name is attached to this House that I have built.

"When Your people take the field against their enemy by whatever way You send them, and they pray to G OD in the direction of the city that You have chosen, and of the House that I have built to Your name,
oh, hear in heaven their prayer and supplication and uphold their cause.

"When they sin against You—for there is no mortal who does not sin—and You are angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and their captors carry them off to an enemy land, near or far;
and then they take it to heart in the land to which they have been carried off, and they repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captors, saying: 'We have sinned, we have acted perversely, we have acted wickedly,'
and they turn back to You with all their heart and soul, in the land of the enemies who have carried them off, and they pray to You in the direction of their land that You gave to their ancestors, of the city that You have chosen, and of the House that I have built to Your name—
oh, give heed in Your heavenly abode to their prayer and supplication, uphold their cause,
and pardon Your people who have sinned against You for all the transgressions that they have committed against You. Grant them mercy in the sight of their captors that they may be merciful to them.

For they are Your very own people that You freed from Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace.

May Your eyes be open to the supplication of Your servant and the supplication of Your people Israel, and may You heed them whenever they call upon You.

For You, O Sovereign G OD, have set them apart for Yourself from all the peoples of the earth as Your very own, as You promised through Moses Your servant when You freed our ancestors from Egypt."

When Solomon finished offering to G OD all this prayer and supplication, he rose from where he had been kneeling, in front of the altar of G OD, his hands spread out toward heaven.

He stood, and in a loud voice blessed the whole congregation of Israel: "Praised be G OD who has granted a haven to Israel—God's people—just as promised; not a single word has failed of all the gracious promises that were made through God's servant Moses.

May the E TERNAL our God be with us, as was the case with our ancestors. May we never be abandoned or forsaken.

May our hearts be inclined to [God], that we may walk in all God's ways and keep the commandments, the laws, and the rules that were enjoined upon our ancestors.

And may these words of mine, which I have offered in supplication before G OD, be close to the E TERNAL our God day and night, that God's servant and this covenanted people Israel may be provided for, according to each day's needs—
to the end that all the peoples of the earth may know that the E TERNAL alone is God, there is no other.

And may you be wholehearted with the E TERNAL our God, to walk in God's ways and keep God's commandments, even as now."

The king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before G OD.

Solomon offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep as sacrifices of well-being to G OD. Thus the king and all the Israelites dedicated the House of G OD.

That day the king consecrated the center of the court that was in front of the House of G OD. For it was there that he presented the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat parts of the offerings of well-being, because the bronze altar that was before G OD was too small to hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat parts of the offerings of well-being.

So Solomon and all Israel with him—a great assemblage, [coming] from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt k from Lebo-hamath to ... Egypt I.e., from one end of the country to the other. —observed the Feast l the Feast See note at v. 2. at that time before the E TERNAL our God, seven days and again seven days, fourteen days in all.

On the eighth day m On the eighth day Of the second seven-day feast; cf. 2 Chron. 7.8-10. he let the people go. They bade the king good-bye and went to their homes, joyful and glad of heart over all the goodness that G OD had shown to God's servant David and to Israel—God's people.

Chapter 9

When Solomon had finished building the House of G OD and the royal palace and everything that Solomon had set his heart on constructing, G OD appeared to a appeared to Or "made contact with." Solomon a second time, as before, at Gibeon.

G OD said to him, "I have heard the prayer and the supplication that you have offered to Me. I consecrate this House that you have built and I set My name there forever. My eyes and My heart shall ever be there.

As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked before Me, wholeheartedly and with uprightness, doing all that I have commanded you [and] keeping My laws and My rules, then I will establish your throne of kingship over Israel forever, as I promised your father David, saying, 'Your line on the throne of Israel shall never end.' b Your line on the throne of Israel shall never end See note at 2.4.

[But] if you and your descendants turn away from Me and do not keep the commandments [and] the laws that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will sweep c sweep Lit. "cut." Israel off the land that I gave them; I will reject d reject Lit. "dismiss from My presence." the House that I have consecrated to My name; and Israel shall become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

And as for this House, once so exalted, e as for this House, once so exalted Targum and some other ancient versions read "and this House shall become a ruin." everyone passing by it shall be appalled and shall hiss. f hiss An action performed at the sight of ruin to ward off a like fate from the observer; cf. note at Jer. 18.16. And when they ask, 'Why did G OD do thus to the land and to this House?'

they shall be told, 'It is because they forsook the E TERNAL their God who freed them from the land of Egypt, and they embraced other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore G OD has brought all this calamity upon them.'"

At the end of the twenty years g the twenty years See 6.38-7.1. during which Solomon constructed the two buildings, G OD 's House and the royal palace—

since King Hiram of Tyre had supplied Solomon with all the cedar and cypress timber and gold that he required—King Solomon in turn gave Hiram twenty towns in the region of Galilee.

But when Hiram came from Tyre to inspect the towns that Solomon had given him, he was not pleased with them.

"My brother," he said, "what sort of towns are these you have given me?" So they were named the land of Cabul, h Cabul Perhaps taken to mean "as nothing." as is still the case. However, Hiram sent the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold. This was the purpose of the forced labor that Solomon imposed: It was to build the House of G OD, his own palace, the Millo, i Millo A citadel. and the wall of Jerusalem, and [to fortify] Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. (Pharaoh king of Egypt had come up and captured Gezer; he destroyed it by fire, killed the Canaanites who dwelt in the town, and gave it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife.) So Solomon fortified Gezer, lower Beth-horon, Baalith, and Tamar j Tamar So kethib, cf. Ezek. 47.19; 48.28; qere Tadmor. in the wilderness, in the land [of Judah], and all of Solomon's garrison towns, chariot towns, and towns for his riders k riders Or "horses"; see note at 1.5. —everything that Solomon set his heart on building in Jerusalem and in the Lebanon, and throughout the territory that he ruled. All the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites who were not of the Israelite stock—those of their descendants who remained in the land and whom the Israelites were not able to annihilate—of these Solomon made a slave force, as is still the case. But he did not reduce any Israelites to slavery; they served, rather, as warriors and as his attendants, officials, and officers, and as commanders of his chariots and riders. These were the prefects l These were the prefects Their names are not listed in the text. that were in charge of Solomon's works and were supervising the people engaged in the work, who numbered 550. As soon as Pharaoh's daughter went up from the City of David to the palace that he had built for her, he built the Millo. m Millo A citadel. Solomon used to offer burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being three times a year on the altar that he had built for G OD, and he used to offer incense on the one that was before G OD. And he kept the House in repair. n he used to offer incense ... kept the House in repair Meaning of Heb. uncertain. King Solomon also built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth o Eloth Elsewhere called Elath. on the shore of the Sea of Reeds in the land of Edom. Hiram sent servants of his with the fleet, mariners who were experienced on the sea, to serve with Solomon's men. They came to Ophir; there they obtained gold in the amount of four hundred and twenty talents, which they delivered to King Solomon.

Chapter 10

The queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, through the name of G OD, a through the name of G OD The force of the phrase is uncertain. and she came to test him with hard questions. She arrived in Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels bearing spices, a great quantity of gold, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she asked him all that she had in mind. Solomon had answers for all her questions; there was nothing that the king did not know, [nothing] to which he could not give her an answer. When the queen of Sheba observed all of Solomon's wisdom, and the palace he had built, the fare of his table, the seating of his courtiers, the service and attire of his attendants, and his wine service, and the burnt offerings that he offered at b and the burnt offerings that he offered at Cf. 2 Chron. 9.4 "and the procession with which he went up to...." the House of G OD, she was left breathless.

She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own land about you and your wisdom was true.

But I did not believe the reports until I came and saw with my own eyes that not even the half had been told me; your wisdom and wealth surpass the reports that I heard.

How fortunate are your people and how fortunate are these your courtiers, who are always in attendance on you and can hear your wisdom!

Praised be the ETERNAL your God, who delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel. It is because of GOD's everlasting love for Israel that you were made king—to administer justice and righteousness."

She presented the king with one hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a large quantity of spices, and precious stones. Never again did such a vast quantity of spices arrive as that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.—

Moreover, Hiram's fleet, which carried gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir a huge quantity of almug wood and precious stones.

The king used the almug wood for decorations in the House of GOD and in the royal palace, and for harps and lyres for the musicians. Such a quantity of almug wood has never arrived or been seen to this day.—

King Solomon, in turn, gave the queen of Sheba everything she wanted and asked for, in addition to what King Solomon gave her out of his royal bounty. Then she and her attendants left and returned to her own land.

The weight of the gold that Solomon received every year was 666 talents of gold,

besides what came from the traders, c traders Or "traders' agents." from the traffic of the merchants, and from all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the regions.

King Solomon made 200 shields of beaten gold—600 shekels of gold to each shield—

and 300 bucklers of beaten gold—three minas of gold to each buckler. The king placed them in the Lebanon Forest House.

The king also made a large throne of ivory, and he overlaid it with refined gold.

Six steps led up to the throne, and the throne had a back with a rounded top, and arms on either side of the seat. Two lions stood beside the arms,

and twelve lions stood on the six steps, six on either side. No such throne was ever made for any other kingdom. d kingdom Or "prince"; like Phoenician mamlat.

All King Solomon's drinking cups were of gold, and all the utensils of the Lebanon Forest House were of pure gold: silver did not count for anything in Solomon's days.

For the king had a Tarshish fleet e Tarshish fleet Probably a fleet of large ships. on the sea, along with Hiram's fleet. Once every three years, the Tarshish fleet came in, bearing gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

King Solomon surpassed all the monarchs on earth in wealth and in wisdom. All the world came to pay homage to Solomon and to listen to the wisdom with which God had endowed him;

and each one would bring tribute—silver and gold objects, robes, weapons and spices, horses and mules—in the amount due each year.

Solomon assembled chariots and horses. f horses See note at 1.5. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses, which he stationed g stationed So 2 Chron. 1.14; 9.25; Heb. here "led." in the chariot towns and with the king in Jerusalem.

The king made silver as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the Shephelah.

Solomon's horses were procured from Mizraim h Mizraim Usually Egypt, here perhaps Muşru, a neighbor of Kue (Cilicia). and Kue. The king's dealers would buy them from Kue at a fixed price.

A chariot imported from Mizraim i Mizraim See note at v. 28. cost 600 shekels of silver, and a horse 150; these in turn were exported by them j them I.e., Solomon's dealers. to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Arameans.

Chapter 11

King Solomon loved many foreign women in addition to Pharaoh's daughter—Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Phoenician, and Hittite women, from the nations of which G OD had said to the Israelites, "None of you shall join them and none of them shall join you, a join you In marriage; cf. Deut. 7.3-4; 23.4, 8-9. lest they turn your heart away to follow their gods." Such Solomon clung to and loved.

He had seven hundred royal wives and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned his heart away.

In his old age, his wives turned away Solomon's heart after other gods, and he was not as wholeheartedly devoted to the E TERNAL his God as his father David had been.

Solomon followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Phoenicians, and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

Solomon did what was displeasing to G OD and did not remain loyal to G OD like his father David.

At that time, Solomon built a shrine for Chemosh the abomination of Moab on the hill near Jerusalem, and one for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites.

And he did the same for all his foreign wives who offered and sacrificed to their gods.

G OD

was angry with Solomon, because his heart turned away from the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, who had appeared to b appeared to See note at 9.2. him twice

and had commanded him about this matter, not to follow other gods; he did not obey what G OD had commanded.

And G OD said to Solomon, "Because you are guilty of this c Because you are guilty of this Lit. "This is with you." —you have not kept My covenant and the laws that I enjoined upon you—I will tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants.

But, for the sake of your father David, I will not do it in your lifetime; I will tear it away from your son.

However, I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give your son one tribe, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen."

So G OD raised up an adversary against Solomon, the Edomite Hadad, who was of the royal family of Edom.

When David was in d was in Emendation yields "defeated"; cf. 2 Sam. 8.13. Edom, Joab the army commander went up to bury the slain, and he killed every male in Edom;

for Joab and all Israel stayed there for six months until he had killed off every male in Edom.

But Hadad, e Hadad Heb. "Adad." together with some Edomites, servants of his father, escaped and headed for Egypt; Hadad was then a young boy.

Setting out from Midian, they came to Paran and took others f others

I.e., subordinates, perhaps as guides for traversing the wilderness. from Paran along with them. Thus they came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, assigned a food allowance to him, and granted him an estate.

Pharaoh took a great liking to Hadad and gave him his sister-in-law, the sister of Queen Tahpenes, as wife.

The sister of Tahpenes bore him a son, Genubath. Tahpenes weaned g weaned Septuagint reads "reared." him in Pharaoh's palace, and Genubath remained in Pharaoh's palace among the sons of Pharaoh.

When Hadad heard in Egypt that David had been laid to rest with his ancestors and that Joab the army commander was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Give me leave to go to my own country."

Pharaoh replied, "What do you lack with me, that you want to go to your own country?" But he said, "Nevertheless, give me leave to go."

Another adversary that God raised up against Solomon h Solomon Heb.

"him." was Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his lord, King

Hadadezer of Zobah,

when David was slaughtering them. He gathered some men and became captain over a troop; they went to Damascus and settled there, and they established a kingdom in Damascus.

He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, adding to the trouble [caused by] Hadad; he repudiated [the authority of] Israel and reigned over Aram.

Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, the son of a widow whose name was Zeruah, was in Solomon's service; he raised his hand against the king.

The circumstances under which he raised his hand against the king were as follows: Solomon built the Millo and repaired the breach of the city of his father, David.

This man Jeroboam was very capable, and when Solomon saw that the young man i the young man Or "this attendant." was a productive worker, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the House of Joseph.

During that time Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem and the prophet Ahijah of Shiloh met him on the way. He had put on a new robe; and when the two were alone in the open country,

Ahijah took hold of the new robe he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces.

"Take ten pieces," he said to Jeroboam. "For thus said the E TERNAL, the God of Israel: I am about to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hands, and I will give you ten tribes.

But one tribe shall remain his—for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.

For they have forsaken Me; they have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Phoenicians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites; they have not walked in My ways, or done what is pleasing to Me, or [kept] My laws and rules, as his father David did.

However, I will not take the entire kingdom away from him, but will keep him as ruler as long as he lives for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, and who kept My commandments and My laws.

But I will take the kingship out of the hands of his son and give it to you—the ten tribes.

To his son I will give one tribe, so that there may be a lamp for My servant David forever before Me in Jerusalem—the city where I have chosen to establish My name.

But you have been chosen by Me; reign j reign I.e., establish your residence. wherever you wish, and you shall be king over Israel.

If you heed all that I command you, and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, keeping My laws and commandments as My servant David did, then I will be with you and I will build for you a lasting dynasty as I did for David. I hereby give Israel to you;

and I will chastise David's descendants for that [sin], though not forever."

Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death, but Jeroboam promptly fled to King Shishak of Egypt; and he remained in Egypt till the death of Solomon.

The other events of Solomon's reign, and all his actions and his wisdom, are recorded in the book of the Annals of Solomon.

The length of Solomon's reign in Jerusalem, over all Israel, was forty years.

Solomon rested with his ancestors and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

Chapter 12

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to acclaim him as king.

Jeroboam son of Nebat learned of it while he was still in Egypt; for Jeroboam had fled from King Solomon, and had settled in Egypt. a and had settled in Egypt Cf. 2 Chron. 10.2 "and Jeroboam returned from Egypt." They sent for him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam as follows:

"Your father made our yoke heavy. Now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke that your father laid on us, and we will serve you."

He answered them, "Go away for three days and then come back to me." So the people went away.

King Rehoboam took counsel with the elders who had served his father Solomon during his lifetime. He said, "What answer do you advise [me] to give to this people?"

They answered him, "If you will be a servant to those people today and serve them, and if you respond to them with kind words, they will be your servants always."

But he ignored the advice that the elders gave him, and took counsel with the young men b the young men Lit. "the children." who had grown up with him and were serving him.

"What," he asked, "do you advise that we reply to the people who said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father placed upon us'?"

And the young men who had grown up with him answered, "Speak thus to the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us.' Say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins.

My father imposed a heavy yoke on you, and I will add to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I will flog you with scorpions.'"

Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, since the king had told them: "Come back on the third day."

The king answered the people harshly, ignoring the advice that the elders had given him.

He spoke to them in accordance with the advice of the young men, and said, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I will flog you with scorpions."

(The king did not listen to the people; for G OD had brought it about in order to fulfill the promise that G OD had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.)

When all Israel saw that the king had not listened to them, the people answered the king: "We have no portion in David, No share in Jesse's son! To your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own House, O David." So the Israelites returned to their homes. c homes Lit. "tents."

But Rehoboam continued to reign over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah.

King Rehoboam sent Adoram, d Adoram Elsewhere called Adoniram; cf. 2 Sam. 20.24 and note. who was in charge of the forced labor, but all Israel pelted him to death with stones. Thereupon King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem.

Thus Israel revolted against the House of David, as is still the case.

When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent messengers and summoned him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the House of David.

On his return to Jerusalem, Rehoboam mustered all the House of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 of the best warriors, to fight against the House of Israel, in order to restore the kingship to Rehoboam son of Solomon.

But the word of God came to Shemaiah, the agent of God:

"Say to King Rehoboam son of Solomon of Judah, and to all the House of Judah and Benjamin and the rest of the people:

Thus said G OD : You shall not set out to make war on your kindred the Israelites. Return to your homes, for this thing has been brought about by Me." They heeded the word of G OD and turned back, in accordance with the word of G OD.

Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and resided there; he moved out from there and fortified Penuel.

Jeroboam said to himself, "Now the kingdom may well return to the House of David.

If these people still go up to offer sacrifices at the House of G OD in Jerusalem, the heart of these people will turn back to their master, King Rehoboam of Judah; they will kill me and go back to King Rehoboam of Judah."

So the king took counsel and made two golden calves. He said to the people, e the people Heb. "them." "You have been going up to Jerusalem long enough. This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!"

He set up one in Bethel and placed the other in Dan.

That proved to be a cause of guilt, for the people went to worship [the calf at Bethel and] the one at Dan.

He also made cult places and appointed priests from the ranks of the people who were not of Levite descent.

He stationed at Bethel the priests of the shrines that he had appointed to sacrifice to the calves that he had made. And Jeroboam established a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month; in imitation of the festival in Judah, he established one at Bethel, and he ascended the altar [there].

On the fifteenth day of the eighth month—the month in which he had contrived of his own mind to establish a festival for the Israelites—Jeroboam ascended the altar that he had made in Bethel. As he ascended the altar to present an offering,

Chapter 13

an agent of God arrived at Bethel from Judah at the command of G OD.

While Jeroboam was standing on the altar a on the altar I.e., at the top of the steps or ramp. to present the offering,

he—the agent of God—at the command of G OD, cried out against the altar:

"O altar, altar! Thus said G OD : A son shall be born to the House of David, Josiah by name; and he shall slaughter upon you the priests of the shrines who bring offerings upon you. And human bones shall be burned upon you."

He gave a portent on that day, saying, "Here is the portent that G OD has decreed: This altar shall break apart, and the ashes on it shall be spilled."

When the king heard what the agent of God had proclaimed against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his arm above the altar and cried, "Seize him!" But the arm that he stretched out against him became rigid, and he could not draw it back.

The altar broke apart and its ashes were spilled—the very portent that the agent of God had announced at G OD 's command.

Then the king spoke up and said to the agent of God, "Please entreat the ETERNAL your God and pray for me that I may be able to draw back my arm." The agent of God entreated GOD and the king was able to draw his arm back; it became as it was before.

The king said to the agent of God, "Come with me to my house and have some refreshment; and I shall give you a gift."

But the agent of God replied to the king, "Even if you give me half your wealth, I will not go in with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water in this place;

for so I was commanded by the word of GOD : You shall eat no bread and drink no water, nor shall you go back by the road by which you came."

So he left by another road and did not go back by the road on which he had come to Bethel.

There was an old prophet living in Bethel; and his sons b sons Heb.

"son." came and told him all the things that the agent of God had done that day in Bethel [and] the words that he had spoken to the king. When they told it to their father,

their father said to them, "Which road did he leave by?" His sons had seen c His sons had seen Septuagint reads "And his sons showed." the road taken by the agent of God who had come from Judah.

"Saddle the donkey for me," he said to his sons. They saddled the donkey for him, and he mounted it

and rode after the agent of God. He came upon him sitting under a terebinth and said to him, "Are you the agent of God who came from Judah?" "Yes, I am," he answered.

"Come home with me," he said, "and have something to eat."

He replied, "I may not go back with you and enter your home; and I may not eat bread or drink water in this place;

the order I received by the word of GOD was: You shall not eat bread or drink water there; nor shall you return by the road on which you came."

"I am a prophet, too," said the other, "and an angel said to me by command of GOD : Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water." He was lying to him.

So he went back with him, and he ate bread and drank water in his house.

While they were sitting at the table, the word of GOD came to the prophet who had brought him back.

He cried out to the agent of God who had come from Judah: "Thus said GOD : Because you have flouted the word of GOD and have not observed what the ETERNAL your God commanded you,

but have gone back and eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which [God] said to you, 'Do not eat bread or drink water [there],' your corpse shall not come to the grave of your ancestors."

After he had eaten bread and had drunk, he saddled the donkey for him—for the prophet whom he had brought back.

He set out, and a lion came upon him on the road and killed him. His corpse lay on the road, with the donkey standing beside it, and the lion also standing beside the corpse.

Some people who passed by saw the corpse lying on the road and the lion standing beside the corpse; they went and told it in the town where the old prophet lived.

And when the prophet who had brought him back from the road heard it, he said, "That is the agent of God who flouted GOD 's command; GOD gave him over to the lion, which mauled him and killed him in accordance with the word that GOD had spoken to him."

He said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me," and they did so.

He set out and found the corpse lying on the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside the corpse; the lion had not eaten the corpse nor had it mauled the donkey.

The prophet lifted up the corpse of the agent of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back; it was brought and it was brought Lit. "it came." to the town of the old prophet for lamentation and burial. He laid the corpse in his own burial place; and they lamented over it, "Alas, my brother!"

After burying him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave where the agent of God lies buried; lay my bones beside his.

For what he announced by the word of G OD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the cult places in the towns of Samaria, shall surely come true."

Even after this incident, Jeroboam did not turn back from his evil way, but kept on appointing priests for the shrines from the ranks of the people. He ordained as priests of the shrines any who so desired.

Thereby the House of Jeroboam incurred guilt—to their utter annihilation from the face of the earth.

Chapter 14

At that time, Abijah, a son of Jeroboam, fell sick.

Jeroboam said to his wife, "Go and disguise yourself, so that you will not be recognized as Jeroboam's wife, and go to Shiloh. The prophet Ahijah lives there, the one who predicted that I would be king over this people.

Take with you ten loaves, some wafers, and a jug of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what will happen to the boy."

Jeroboam's wife did so; she left and went to Shiloh and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes had become sightless with age;

but G OD had said to Ahijah, "Jeroboam's wife is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, who is sick. Speak to her thus and thus. When she arrives, she will be in disguise."

Ahijah heard the sound of her feet as she came through the door, and he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why are you disguised? I have a harsh message for you.

Go tell Jeroboam: Thus said the E TERNAL, the God of Israel: I raised you up from among the people and made you a ruler over My people Israel;

I tore away the kingdom from the House of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and followed Me with all his heart, doing only what was right in My sight.

You have acted worse than all those who preceded you; you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke My anger; and Me you have cast behind your back.

Therefore I will bring disaster upon the House of Jeroboam and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, bond and free, a bond and free Meaning of Heb. uncertain; possibly "kinsman and friend," cf. 16.11. in Israel. I will sweep away the House of Jeroboam utterly, as dung is swept away. Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the town shall be devoured by dogs; and anyone who dies in the open country shall be eaten by the birds of the air; for G OD has spoken.

As for you, go back home; as soon as you set foot in the town, the child will die.

And all Israel shall lament over him and bury him; he alone of Jeroboam's family shall be brought to burial, for in him alone of the House of Jeroboam has some devotion been found to the E TERNAL, the God of Israel. Moreover, G OD will raise up a king over Israel who will destroy the House of Jeroboam, this day and even now. b this day and even now Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

"G OD will strike Israel until it sways like a reed in water—and uproot Israel from this good land that was given to their ancestors, and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have provoked G OD by the

sacred posts c sacred posts Used in worship of the goddess Asherah. that they have made for themselves.

Israel will be forsaken because of the sins that Jeroboam committed and led Israel to commit."

Jeroboam's wife got up and left, and she went to Tirzah. As soon as she stepped over the threshold of her house, the child died.

They buried him and all Israel lamented over him, in accordance with the word that G OD had spoken through the prophet Ahijah—God's servant.

The other events of Jeroboam's reign, how he fought and how he ruled, are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years; then he rested with his ancestors, and his son Nadab succeeded him as king.

Meanwhile, Rehoboam son of Solomon had become king in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem—the city G OD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to establish God's name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. Judah did what was displeasing to G OD, provoking more outrage than their ancestors had by the sins that they committed.

They too built for themselves shrines, pillars, and sacred posts d sacred posts See note at v. 15. on every high hill and under every leafy tree; there were also consecrated workers e consecrated workers Or "retainers"; meaning of Heb. qadesh uncertain. in the land. [Judah] imitated all the abhorrent practices of the nations that G OD had dispossessed before the Israelites.

In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem

and carried off the treasures of the House of G OD and the treasures of the royal palace. He carried off everything; he even carried off all the golden shields that Solomon had made.

King Rehoboam had bronze shields made instead, and he entrusted them to the officers of the guard f guard Lit. "runners." who guarded the entrance to the royal palace.

Whenever the king went into the House of G OD, the guards would carry them and then bring them back to the armory of the guards.

The other events of Rehoboam's reign, and all his actions, are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah.

There was continual war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

Rehoboam rested with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the City of David; his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. His son Abijam succeeded him as king.

Chapter 15

In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah.

He reigned three years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. a Maacah daughter of Abishalom Cf. 2 Chron. 13.2 "Micaiah daughter of Uriel of Gibeah," and v. 10 below, where Maacah, daughter of Abishalom, appears as mother of Asa.

He continued in all the sins that his father before him had committed; he was not wholehearted with the E TERNAL his God, like his forefather David.

Yet, for the sake of David, the E TERNAL his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by raising up his descendant after him and by preserving Jerusalem.

For David had done what was pleasing to G OD and never turned throughout his life from all that had been commanded him, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

There was war between Abijam b Abijam So several mss.; most mss. and the editions read "Rehoboam." and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

The other events of Abijam's reign and all his actions are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah; there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

Abijam rested with his ancestors; he was buried in the City of David, and his son Asa succeeded him as king.

In the twentieth year of King Jeroboam of Israel, Asa became king over Judah.

He reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom.

Asa did what was pleasing to G OD, as his forefather David had done.

He expelled the consecrated workers c consecrated workers Or "retainers"; meaning of Heb. qedeshim uncertain. from the land, and he removed all the idols that his ancestors had made.

He also deposed his mother Maacah from the rank of queen mother, because she had made an abominable thing d an abominable thing Exact meaning of Heb. uncertain. for [the goddess] Asherah. Asa cut down her abominable thing and burnt it in the Wadi Kidron.

The shrines, indeed, were not abolished; however, Asa was wholehearted with the Eternal his God all his life.

He brought into the House of G OD all the consecrated things of his father and his own consecrated things e his own consecrated things So kethib and 2 Chron. 15.18. -silver, gold, and utensils.

There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days.

King Baasha of Israel advanced against Judah, and he fortified Ramah to prevent anyone belonging to King Asa of Judah from going out or coming in.

So Asa took all the silver and gold that remained in the treasuries of the House of G OD as well as the treasuries of the royal palace, and he entrusted them to his officials. King Asa sent them to King Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion of Aram, who resided in Damascus, with this message:

"There is a pact between you and me, and between your father and my father. I herewith send you a gift of silver and gold: Go and break your pact with King Baasha of Israel, so that he may withdraw from me."

Ben-hadad responded to King Asa's request; he sent his army officers against the towns of Israel and captured Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, as well as all the land of Naphtali.

When Baasha heard about it, he stopped fortifying Ramah and remained in Tirzah.

Then King Asa mustered all Judah, with no exemptions; and they carried away the stones and timber with which Baasha had fortified Ramah. With these King Asa fortified Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

All the other events of Asa's reign, and all his exploits, and all his actions, and the towns that he fortified, are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah. However, in his old age he suffered from a foot ailment.

Asa rested with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his forefather David. His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king. Nadab son of Jeroboam had become king over Israel in the second year of King Asa of Judah, and he reigned over Israel for two years.

He did what was displeasing to G OD ; he continued in the ways of his father, in the sins that he caused Israel to commit.

Then Baasha son of Ahijah, of the House of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon of the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.

Baasha killed him in the third year of King Asa of Judah and became king in his stead.

As soon as he became king, he struck down all the House of Jeroboam; he did not spare a single soul belonging to Jeroboam until he destroyed it-

in accordance with the word spoken through G OD 's servant Ahijah the Shilonite—
because of the sins that Jeroboam committed and that he caused Israel to commit, thereby provoking the anger of the E TERNAL, the God of Israel. The other events of Nadab's reign and all his actions are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.
There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days. In the third year of King Asa of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah became king in Tirzah over all Israel—for twenty-four years.
He did what was displeasing to G OD ; he followed the ways of Jeroboam and the sins that he caused Israel to commit.

Chapter 16

The word of G OD came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha:
"Because I lifted you up from the dust and made you a ruler over My people Israel, but you followed the way of Jeroboam and caused My people Israel to sin, provoking My anger with their sins—
I am going to sweep away Baasha and his house. I will make your house like the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat.
Anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the town shall be devoured by dogs, and anyone belonging to him who dies in the open country shall be devoured by the birds of the sky."
The other events of Baasha's reign and his actions and his exploits are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.
Baasha rested with his ancestors and was buried in Tirzah. His son Elah succeeded him as king.
But the word of G OD had come through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and against his house, that it would fare like the House of Jeroboam, which he himself had struck down, a which he himself had struck down Syntax of Heb. unclear. because of all the evil he did that was displeasing to G OD, provoking anger with his deeds.
In the twenty-sixth year of King Asa of Judah, Elah son of Baasha became king over Israel, at Tirzah—for two years.
His officer Zimri, commander of half the chariotry, committed treason against him while he was at Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was in charge of the palace at Tirzah.
Zimri entered, struck him down, and killed him; he succeeded him as king in the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah.
No sooner had he become king and ascended the throne than he struck down all the House of Baasha; he did not leave a single male of his, nor any kin b kin Heb. "avenger." or friend.
Thus Zimri destroyed all the House of Baasha, in accordance with the word that G OD had spoken through the prophet Jehu—
because of the sinful acts that Baasha and his son Elah committed, and that they caused Israel to commit, provoking the anger of the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, with their false gods.
The other events of Elah's reign and all his actions are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.
During the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, Zimri reigned in Tirzah for seven days. At the time, the troops were encamped at Gibbethon of the Philistines.
When the troops who were encamped there learned that Zimri had committed treason and had struck down the king, that very day, in the camp, all Israel acclaimed the army commander Omri king over Israel.
Omri and all Israel then withdrew from Gibbethon and laid siege to Tirzah.
When Zimri saw that the town was taken, he went into the citadel of the royal palace and burned down the royal palace over himself. And so he died—

because of the sins that he committed and caused Israel to commit, doing what was displeasing to G OD and following the ways of Jeroboam. The other events of Zimri's reign, and the treason that he committed, are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

Then the people of Israel split into two factions: a part of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath to make him king, and the other part followed Omri.

Those who followed Omri proved stronger than those who followed Tibni son of Ginath; Tibni died and Omri became king.

In the thirty-first year of King Asa of Judah, Omri became king over Israel—for twelve years. He reigned in Tirzah six years.

Then he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; he built [a town] on the hill and named the town that he built Samaria, after Shemer, the owner of the hill.

Omri did what was displeasing to G OD ; he was worse than all who preceded him.

He followed all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and the sins that he committed and caused Israel to commit, provoking the anger of the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, with their futilities.

The other events of Omri's reign, [and] his actions, and the exploits he performed, are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

Omri rested with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria; and his son Ahab succeeded him as king.

Ahab son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of King Asa of Judah, and Ahab son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-two years.

Ahab son of Omri did what was displeasing to G OD, more than all who preceded him.

Not content to follow the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, he took as wife Jezebel daughter of King Ethbaal of the Phoenicians, and he went and served Baal and worshiped him.

He erected an altar to Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria.

Ahab also made a sacred post. c sacred post See note at 14.15. Ahab did more to provoke the anger of the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, than all the kings of Israel who preceded him.

During his reign, Hiel the Bethelite fortified Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of Abiram his first-born, and set its gates in place at the cost of Segub his youngest, in accordance with the words that G OD had spoken through Joshua son of Nun. d that G OD had spoken through Joshua son of Nun Cf. Josh. 6.26.

Chapter 17

Elijah the Tishbite, an inhabitant of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the E TERNAL lives, the God of Israel whom I serve, there will be no dew or rain except at my bidding."

The word of G OD came to him:

"Leave this place; turn eastward and go into hiding by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

You will drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."

He proceeded to do as G OD had bidden: he went, and he stayed by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

The ravens brought him bread and meat every morning and every evening, and he drank from the wadi.

After some time the wadi dried up, because there was no rain in the land. And the word of G OD came to him:

"Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon, and stay there; I have designated a widow there to feed you."

So he went at once to Zarephath. When he came to the entrance of the town, a widow was there gathering wood. He called out to her, "Please bring me a little water in your pitcher, and let me drink."

As she went to fetch it, he called out to her, "Please bring along a piece of bread for me."

"As the E TERNAL your God lives," she replied, "I have nothing baked, nothing but a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am just gathering a couple of sticks, so that I can go home and prepare it for me and my son; we shall eat it and then we shall die."

"Don't be afraid," said Elijah to her. "Go and do as you have said; but first make me a small cake from what you have there, and bring it out to me; then make some for yourself and your son."

For thus said the E TERNAL, the God of Israel: The jar of flour shall not give out and the jug of oil shall not fail until the day that G OD sends rain upon the ground."

She went and did as Elijah had spoken, and she and he and her household had food for a long time.

The jar of flour did not give out, nor did the jug of oil fail, just as G OD had spoken through Elijah.

After a while, the son of that woman—the owner of the house—fell sick, and his illness grew worse, until he had no breath left in him.

She said to Elijah, "What harm have I done you, O agent of God, that you should come here to recall my sin and cause the death of my son?"

"Give me the boy," he said to her; and taking him from her arms, he carried him to the upper chamber where he was staying, and laid him down on his own bed.

He cried out to G OD and said, "My E TERNAL God, will You bring calamity upon this widow whose guest I am, and let her son die?"

Then he stretched out over the child three times, and cried out to G OD, saying, "My E TERNAL God, let this child's life return to his body!"

G OD heard Elijah's plea; the child's life returned to his body, and he revived.

Elijah picked up the child and brought him down from the upper room into the main room, and gave him to his mother. "See," said Elijah, "your son is alive."

And the woman answered Elijah, "Now I know that you are an agent of God and that the word of G OD is truly in your mouth."

Chapter 18

Much later, in the third year, a in the third year Of the drought; see 17.1. the word of G OD came to Elijah: "Go, appear before Ahab; then I will send rain upon the earth."

Thereupon Elijah set out to appear before Ahab. The famine was severe in Samaria.

Ahab had summoned Obadiah, the steward of the palace. (Obadiah revered G OD greatly.

When Jezebel was killing off the prophets of G OD, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and provided them with food and drink.)

And Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go through the land, to all the springs of water and to all the wadis. Perhaps we shall find some grass to keep horses and mules alive, so that we are not left without beasts."

They divided the country between them to explore it, Ahab going alone in one direction and Obadiah going alone in another direction.

Obadiah was on the road, when Elijah suddenly confronted him. [Obadiah] recognized him and flung himself on his face, saying, "Is that you, my lord Elijah?"

"Yes, it is I," he answered. "Go tell your lord: Elijah is here!"

But he said, "What wrong have I done, that you should hand your servant over to Ahab to be killed?

As the E TERNAL your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom to which my lord has not sent to look for you; and when they said, 'He is not here,' he made that kingdom or nation swear that you could not be found.

And now you say, 'Go tell your lord: Elijah is here!'

When I leave you, the spirit of G OD will carry you off I don't know where; and when I come and tell Ahab and he does not find you, he will kill me. Yet your servant has revered G OD from my youth.

My lord has surely been told what I did when Jezebel was killing the prophets of G OD, how I hid a hundred of the prophets of G OD, fifty to a cave, and provided them with food and drink.

And now you say, 'Go tell your lord: Elijah is here.' Why, he will kill me!"

Elijah replied, "As G OD of Hosts lives, whom I serve, I will appear before him this very day."

Obadiah went to find Ahab, and informed him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

When Ahab caught sight of Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

He retorted, "It is not I who have brought trouble on Israel, but you and your father's House, by forsaking the commandments of G OD and going after the Baalim.

Now summon all Israel to join me at Mount Carmel, together with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." b who eat at Jezebel's table I.e., who are maintained by Jezebel.

Ahab sent orders to all the Israelites and gathered the prophets at Mount Carmel.

Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you keep hopping between two opinions? c between two opinions Lit. "on the two boughs." If the E TERNAL is God, then follow [the E TERNAL]; and if Baal, follow [Baal]!" But the people answered him not a word.

Then Elijah said to the people, "I am the only prophet of G OD left, while the prophets of Baal number four hundred and fifty.

Let two young bulls be given to us. Let them choose one bull, cut it up, and lay it on the wood, but let them not apply fire; I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, and will not apply fire.

You will then invoke your god by name, and I will invoke G OD by name; and let us agree: d and let us agree Lit. "and it shall be." the god who responds with fire, that one is God." And all the people answered, "Very good!"

Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull and prepare it first, for you are the majority; invoke your god by name, but apply no fire."

They took the bull that was given them; they prepared it, and invoked Baal by name from morning until noon, shouting, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no sound, and no one who responded; so they performed a hopping dance about the altar that had been set up.

When noon came, Elijah mocked them, saying, "Shout louder! After all, he is a god. But he may be in conversation, he may be detained, or he may be on a journey, e But he may be ... on a journey Meaning of Heb. uncertain. or perhaps he is asleep and will wake up."

So they shouted louder, and gashed themselves with knives and spears, according to their practice, until the blood streamed over them.

When noon passed, they kept raving f kept raving In contrast to others "prophesied." until the hour of presenting the grain offering. Still there was no sound, and no one who responded or heeded.

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come closer to me"; and all the people came closer to him. He repaired the damaged altar of G OD.

Then Elijah took twelve stones, corresponding to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob—to whom the word of G OD had come: "Israel shall be your name" g Israel shall be your name See Gen. 35.10. —

and with the stones he built an altar in the name of G OD. Around the altar he made a trench large enough for two seah s of seed. h large enough for two seah s of seed I.e., an area that would require two seah s of seed if sown. Cf. Lev. 27.16; Isa. 5.10.

He laid out the wood, and he cut up the bull and laid it on the wood.

And he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it over the burnt offering and the wood." Then he said, "Do it a second time"; and they did it a second time. "Do it a third time," he said; and they did it a third time.

The water ran down around the altar, and even the trench was filled with water.

When it was time to present the grain offering, the prophet Elijah came forward and said, "O E TERNAL One, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel! Let it be known today that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your bidding.

Answer me, O E TERNAL One, answer me, that this people may know that You, O E TERNAL One, are God; for You have turned their hearts backward." i for You have turned their hearts backward Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Then fire from G OD descended and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the earth; and it licked up the water that was in the trench.

When they saw this, all the people flung themselves on their faces and cried out: "the E TERNAL One alone is God, the E TERNAL One alone is God!"

Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal, let not a single one of them get away." They seized them, and Elijah took them down to the Wadi Kishon and slaughtered them there.

Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is a rumbling of [approaching] rain,"

and Ahab went up to eat and drink. Elijah meanwhile climbed to the top of Mount Carmel, crouched on the ground, and put his face between his knees.

And he said to his servant, "Go up and look toward the Sea." He went up and looked and reported, "There is nothing." Seven times [Elijah] said, "Go back,"

and the seventh time, [the servant] reported, "A cloud as small as a person's hand is rising in the west." Then [Elijah] said, "Go say to Ahab, 'Hitch up [your chariot] and go down before the rain stops you.'"

Meanwhile the sky grew black with clouds; there was wind, and a heavy downpour fell; Ahab mounted his chariot and drove off to Jezreel.

G OD 's hand had come upon Elijah. He tied up his skirts j He tied up his skirts Lit. "He bound up his loins." and ran in front of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

Chapter 19

When Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had put all the prophets a all the prophets Of Baal; see 18.40. to the sword, Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "Thus and more may the gods do b Thus and more may the gods do A formula of imprecation. Many Heb. mss. and Septuagint add "to me." if by this time tomorrow I have not made you like one of them."

Frightened, c Frightened So many Heb. mss. and Septuagint; most mss., and the editions, read "And he saw, and." he fled at once for his life. He came to Beer-sheba, which is in Judah, and left his servant there; he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush and sat down under it, and prayed that he might die. "Enough!" he

cried. "Now, O E TERNAL One, take my life, for I am no better than my predecessors." d predecessors Lit. "fathers."

He lay down and fell asleep under a broom bush. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat."

He looked about; and there, beside his head, was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water! He ate and drank, and lay down again.

The angel of G OD came a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, or the journey will be too much for you."

He arose and ate and drank; and with the strength from that meal he walked forty days and forty nights as far as the mountain of God at Horeb.

There he went into a cave, and there he spent the night. Then the word of G OD came to him: "Why are you here, Elijah?"

He replied, "I am moved by zeal for the E TERNAL, the God of Hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and put Your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they are out to take my life."

"Come out," He called, "and stand on the mountain before G OD." And lo, G OD passed by. There was a great and mighty wind, splitting mountains and shattering rocks by G OD 's power; but G OD was not in the wind. After the wind—an earthquake; but G OD was not in the earthquake.

After the earthquake—fire; but G OD was not in the fire. And after the fire—a soft murmuring sound. e a soft murmuring sound In contrast to others "a still, small voice."

When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his mantle about his face and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then a voice addressed him: "Why are you here, Elijah?"

He answered, "I am moved by zeal for the E TERNAL, the God of Hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and have put Your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they are out to take my life."

G OD

said to him, "Go back by the way you came, [and] on to the wilderness of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael as king of Aram.

Also anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah to succeed you as prophet.

Whoever escapes the sword of Hazael shall be slain by Jehu, and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu shall be slain by Elisha.

I will leave in Israel only seven thousand—every knee that has not knelt to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him."

He set out from there and came upon Elisha son of Shaphat as he was plowing. There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah came over to him and threw his mantle over him.

He left the oxen and ran after Elijah, saying: "Let me kiss my father and mother good-by, and I will follow you." And he answered him, "Go back. What have I done to you?" f What have I done to you? I.e., I am not stopping you.

He turned back from him and took the yoke of oxen and slaughtered them; he boiled their meat g their meat Lit. "them, the flesh." with the gear h with the gear I.e., using it as firewood; cf. 2 Sam. 24.22. of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and became his attendant.

Chapter 20

King Ben-hadad of Aram gathered his whole army; thirty-two kings accompanied him with horses and chariots. He advanced against Samaria, laid siege to it, and attacked it.

And he sent messengers to Ahab inside the city

to say to him, "Thus said Ben-hadad: Your silver and gold are mine, and your beautiful wives and children are mine."

The king of Israel replied, "As you say, my lord king: I and all I have are yours."

Then the messengers came again and said, "Thus said Ben-hadad: When I sent you the order to give me your silver and gold, and your wives and children,

I meant that tomorrow at this time I will send my servants to you and they will search your house and the houses of your courtiers and seize everything you a you Several ancient versions read "they." prize and take it away."

Then the king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land, and he said, "See for yourselves how that man is bent on evil! For when he demanded my wives and my children, my silver and my gold, I did not refuse him."

All the elders and all the people said, "Do not obey and do not submit!"

So he said to Ben-hadad's messengers, "Tell my lord the king: All that you first demanded of your servant I shall do, but this thing I cannot do." The messengers went and reported this to him.

Thereupon Ben-hadad sent him this message: "May the gods do thus to me and even more, b May the gods do thus to me and even more See note at 19.2. if the dust of Samaria will provide even a handful for each of the men who are right behind me!"

The king of Israel replied, "Tell him: Let not him who girds on his sword boast like him who ungirds it!"

On hearing this reply—while he and the other kings were drinking together at Succoth—Ben-hadad c Ben-hadad Heb. "he." commanded his followers, "Advance!" And they advanced against the city.

Then a certain prophet went up to King Ahab of Israel and said, "Thus said G OD : Do you see that great host? I will deliver it into your hands today, and you shall know that I am G OD."

"Through whom?" asked Ahab. He answered, "Thus said G OD : Through the aides of the provincial governors." He asked, "Who shall begin the battle?" And he answered, "You."

So he mustered the aides of the provincial governors, 232 strong, and then he mustered all the troops—all the Israelites—7,000 strong.

They marched out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk at Succoth together with the thirty-two kings allied with him.

The aides of the provincial governors rushed out first. Ben-hadad sent [scouts], who told him, "Some men have come out from Samaria."

He said, "If they have come out to surrender, take them alive; and if they have come out for battle, take them alive anyhow."

But the others—the aides of the provincial governors, with the army behind them—had already rushed out of the city,

and each of them struck down his opponent. The Arameans fled, and Israel pursued them; but King Ben-hadad of Aram escaped on a horse with other riders.

The king of Israel came out and attacked the horses and chariots, and inflicted a great defeat on the Arameans.

Then the prophet approached the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, keep up your efforts, and consider well what you must do; for the king of Aram will attack you at the turn of the year."

Now the ministers of the king of Aram said to him, "Their God is a God of mountains; that is why they got the better of us. But if we fight them in the plain, we will surely get the better of them.

Do this: Remove all the kings from their posts and appoint governors in their place.

Then muster for yourself an army equal to the army you lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot. And let us fight them in the plain, and we will surely get the better of them." He took their advice and acted accordingly.

At the turn of the year, Ben-hadad mustered the Arameans and advanced on Aphek to fight Israel.

Now the Israelites had been mustered and provisioned, and they went out against them; but when the Israelites encamped against them, they looked like two flocks of flocks Meaning of Heb. uncertain. of goats, while the Arameans covered the land.

Then the agent of God approached and spoke to the king of Israel, "Thus said G OD : Because the Arameans have said, 'G OD is a God of mountains— but not a God of lowlands,' I will deliver that great host into your hands; and you shall know that I am G OD."

For seven days they were encamped opposite each other. On the seventh day, the battle was joined and the Israelites struck down 100,000 Aramean foot soldiers in one day.

The survivors fled to Aphek, inside the town, and the wall fell on the 27,000 survivors. Ben-hadad also fled and took refuge inside the town, in an inner chamber.

His ministers said to him, "We have heard that the kings of the House of Israel are magnanimous kings. Let us put sackcloth on our loins and ropes on our heads, and surrender to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life."

So they girded sackcloth on their loins and wound ropes around their heads, and came to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'I beg you, spare my life.'" He replied, "Is he still alive? He is my brother." e He is my brother I.e., I would accept him as my treaty partner.

The men divined his meaning and quickly caught the word from him, f caught the word from him Meaning of Heb. uncertain. saying, "Yes, Ben-hadad is your brother." g your brother I.e., willing to be your treaty partner. "Go, bring him," he said. Ben-hadad came out to him, and he invited him into his chariot.

Ben-hadad said to him, "I will give back the towns that my father took from your father, and you may set up bazaars for yourself in Damascus as my father did in Samaria." "And I, for my part," [said Ahab,] "will let you go home under these terms." So he made a treaty with him and dismissed him.

A certain man, a disciple of the prophets, said to another, at the word of G OD, "Strike me"; but the man refused to strike him.

He said to him, "Because you have not obeyed G OD, a lion will strike you dead as soon as you leave me." And when he left, a lion came upon him and killed him.

Then he met another man and said, "Come, strike me." So the man struck him and wounded him.

Then the prophet, disguised by a cloth over his eyes, went and waited for the king by the road.

As the king passed by, he cried out to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the thick of the battle. Suddenly someone came over and brought a man to me, saying, 'Guard this man! If he goes missing, it will be your life for his, or you will have to pay a talent of silver.'

While your servant was busy here and there, he got away." The king of Israel responded, "You have your verdict; you pronounced it yourself."

Quickly he removed the cloth from his eyes, and the king recognized him as one of the prophets.

He said to him, "Thus said G OD : Because you have set free the man whom I doomed, your life shall be forfeit for his life and your people for his people."

Dispirited and sullen, the king of Israel left for home and came to Samaria.

[The following events] occurred some time afterward: Naboth the Jezreelite owned a vineyard in Jezreel, adjoining the palace of King Ahab of Samaria.

Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, so that I may have it as a vegetable garden, since it is right next to my palace. I will give you a better vineyard in exchange; or, if you prefer, I will pay you the price in money."

But Naboth replied, "G OD forbid that I should give up to you what I have inherited from my fathers!"

Ahab went home dispirited and sullen because of the answer that Naboth the Jezreelite had given him: "I will not give up to you what I have inherited from my fathers!" He lay down on his bed and turned away his face, and he would not eat.

His wife Jezebel came to him and asked him, "Why are you so dispirited that you won't eat?"

So he told her, "I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and proposed to him, 'Sell me your vineyard for money, or if you prefer, I'll give you another vineyard in exchange'; but he answered, 'I will not give my vineyard to you.'"

His wife Jezebel said to him, "Now is the time to show yourself king over Israel. Rise and eat something, and be cheerful; I will get the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite for you."

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived in the same town with Naboth.

In the letters she wrote as follows: "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the front of the assembly.

And seat two scoundrels opposite him, and let them testify against him: 'You have reviled God and king!' Then take him out and stone him to death."

The people of his town—the elders and nobles who lived in his town—did as Jezebel had instructed them, just as was written in the letters she had sent them:

They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the front of the assembly.

Then the two scoundrels came and sat down opposite him; and those scoundrels testified against Naboth publicly as follows: "Naboth has reviled God and king." Then they and they I.e., the leaders of Naboth's town (see v. 11), the two scoundrels, and perhaps others; cf. Lev. 24.14; Deut. 17.6-7. took him outside the town and stoned him to death.

Word was sent to Jezebel: "Naboth has been stoned to death."

As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Go and take possession of the vineyard that Naboth the Jezreelite refused to sell you for money; for Naboth is no longer alive, he is dead."

When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab set out for the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it.

Then the word of G OD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

"Go down and confront King Ahab of Israel who [resides] in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard; he has gone down there to take possession of it.

Say to him, 'Thus said G OD : Would you murder and take possession? Thus said G OD : In the very place where the dogs lapped up Naboth's blood, the dogs will lap up your blood too.'"

Ahab said to Elijah, "So you have found me, my enemy?" "Yes, I have found you," he replied. "Because you have committed yourself to doing what is evil in G OD 's sight,

I will bring disaster upon you. I will make a clean sweep of you, I will cut off from Israel every male belonging to Ahab, bond and free. b bond and free See note at 14.10.

And I will make your house like the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the House of Baasha son of Ahijah, because of the provocation you have caused by leading Israel to sin.

And G OD has also spoken concerning Jezebel: 'The dogs shall devour Jezebel in the field c field So nine Heb. mss. and the parallel 2 Kings 9.36, as well as Targum and other ancient versions. Most texts read here "rampart." of Jezreel.

All of Ahab's line who die in the town shall be devoured by dogs, and all who die in the open country shall be devoured by the birds of the sky.'" (Indeed, there never was anyone like Ahab, who committed himself to doing what was displeasing to G OD, at the instigation of his wife Jezebel.

He acted most abominably, straying after the fetishes just like the Amorites, whom G OD had dispossessed before the Israelites.)

When Ahab heard these words, he rent his clothes and put sackcloth on his body. He fasted and lay in sackcloth and walked about subdued.

Then the word of G OD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

"Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the disaster in his lifetime; I will bring the disaster upon his house in his son's time."

Chapter 22

There was a lull of a There was a lull of Lit. "They remained." three years, with no war between Aram and Israel.

In the third year, King Jehoshaphat of Judah came to visit the king of Israel.

The king of Israel said to his courtiers, "You know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and yet we do nothing to recover it from the hands of the king of Aram."

And he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you come with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?" Jehoshaphat answered the king of Israel, "I will do what you do; my troops shall be your troops, my horses shall be your horses."

But Jehoshaphat said further to the king of Israel, "Please, first inquire of G OD."

So the king of Israel gathered the prophets, about four hundred of them, and asked them, "Shall I march upon Ramoth-gilead for battle, or shall I not?" "March," they said, "and the Sovereign will deliver it into Your Majesty's hands."

Then Jehoshaphat asked, "Isn't there another prophet of G OD here through whom we can inquire?"

And the king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is one more through whom we can inquire of G OD; but I hate him, because he never prophesies anything good for me, but only misfortune-Micaiah son of Imlah." But King Jehoshaphat said, "Don't say that, Your Majesty."

So the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once."

The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were seated on their thrones, arrayed in their robes, on the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

Zedekiah son of Chenaanah had provided himself with iron horns; and he said, "Thus said G OD : With these you shall gore the Arameans till you make an end of them."

And all the other prophets were prophesying similarly, "March upon Ramoth-gilead and triumph! G OD will deliver it into Your Majesty's hands."

The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him: "Look, the words of the prophets are with one accord favorable to the king. Let your word be like that of the rest of them; speak a favorable word."

"As G OD lives," Micaiah answered, "I will speak only what G OD tells me."

When he came before the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we march upon Ramoth-gilead for battle, or shall we not?" He answered him, "March and triumph! G OD will deliver [it] into Your Majesty's hands."

The king said to him, "How many times must I adjure you to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of G OD?"

Then he said, "I saw all Israel scattered over the hills like sheep without a shepherd; and G OD said, 'These have no master; let everyone return home in safety.'"

"Didn't I tell you," said the king of Israel to Jehoshaphat, "that he would not prophesy good fortune for me, but only misfortune?"

But [Micaiah] said, "I call upon you to hear the word of G OD! I saw G OD seated upon a throne, with all the host of heaven standing in attendance to the right and to the left.

G OD asked, 'Who will entice Ahab so that he will march and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' Then one said thus and another said thus,

until a certain spirit came forward and stood before G OD and said, 'I will entice him.' 'How?' G OD asked him.

And he replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then [God] said, 'You will entice and you will prevail. Go out and do it.'

So G OD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours; for G OD has decreed disaster upon you."

Thereupon Zedekiah son of Chenaanah stepped up and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and demanded, "Which way did the spirit of G OD pass from me to speak with you?"

And Micaiah replied, "You'll find out on the day when you try to hide in the innermost room."

Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and turn him over to Amon, the city's governor, and to Prince Joash, and say, 'The king's orders are: Put this fellow in prison, and let his fare be scant bread and scant water until I come home safe.'"

To which Micaiah retorted, "If you ever come home safe, G OD has not spoken through me." He said further, "Listen, all you peoples!" b He said further, "Listen, all you peoples!" Perhaps a notation suggesting that Micaiah was identical with Micah, whose prophecies begin, "Listen, all you peoples," Mic. 1.2.

So the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah marched upon Ramoth-gilead.

The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go c I will disguise myself and go Infinitives used for finite verbs; so Targum and Septuagint. into the battle; but you, wear your robes." So the king of Israel went into the battle disguised.

Now the king of Aram had instructed his thirty-two chariot officers: "Don't attack anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel."

So when the chariot officers saw Jehoshaphat, whom they took for the king of Israel, they turned upon him to attack him, and Jehoshaphat cried out. And when the chariot officers became aware that he was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

Then another man drew his bow at random and he hit the king of Israel between the plates of d the plates of Meaning of Heb. uncertain. the armor; and he said to his charioteer, "Turn the horses e the horses Lit. "your hand," because horses are guided by a pull on the appropriate rein; cf. 2 Kings 9.23. around and get me behind the lines; f behind the lines Lit. "outside the camp." I'm wounded."

The battle raged all day long, g raged all day long Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and the king remained propped up in the chariot facing Aram; the blood from the wound ran down into the hollow of the chariot, and at dusk he died.

As the sun was going down, a shout went through the army: "Every man to his own town! Every man to his own district."

So the king died and was brought h and was brought Lit. "he came." to Samaria. They buried the king in Samaria, and they flushed out the chariot at the pool of Samaria. Thus the dogs lapped up his blood and the whores bathed [in it], in accordance with the word that G OD had spoken. i the word that G OD had spoken Cf. 21.19. The other events of Ahab's reign, and all his actions—the ivory palace that he built and all the towns that he fortified—are all recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

Ahab rested with his ancestors, and his son Ahaziah succeeded him as king.

Jehoshaphat son of Asa had become king of Judah in the fourth year of King Ahab of Israel.

Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.

He followed closely the course of his father Asa and did not deviate from it, doing what was pleasing to G OD.

However, the shrines did not cease to function; the people still sacrificed and offered at the shrines.

And further, Jehoshaphat submitted to the king of Israel.

As for the other events of Jehoshaphat's reign and the valor he displayed in battle, they are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah.

(He also stamped out the remaining consecrated workers j consecrated workers Or "retainers"; meaning of Heb. qadesh uncertain. who had survived in the land from the time of his father Asa.)

There was no king in Edom; a viceroy acted as king.

Jehoshaphat k a viceroy acted as king. Jehoshaphat Emendation yields "the viceroy of King Jehoshaphat." constructed Tarshish ships l Tarshish ships See note at 10.22. to sail to Ophir for gold. But he did not sail because the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber.

Then Ahaziah son of Ahab proposed to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants sail on the ships with your servants"; but Jehoshaphat would not agree.

Jehoshaphat rested with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his forefather David, and his son Jehoram succeeded him as king.

[Meanwhile,] Ahaziah son of Ahab had become king of Israel, in Samaria, in the seventeenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah; he reigned over Israel two years.

He did what was displeasing to G OD, following in the footsteps of his father and his mother, and in those of Jeroboam son of Nebat who had caused Israel to sin.

He worshiped Baal and bowed down to him; he provoked the anger of the E TERNAL, the God of Israel, just as his father had done.